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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; September 21, 2009

TOP HEADLINES

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Chosun Ilbo, Segye Ilbo, Seoul Shinmun  
University Graduates Failing to Land Regular Jobs

JoongAng Ilbo  
First Disclosure of College Scholastic Ability Test Scores  
from 2005 to 2009 by City and District

Dong-a Ilbo  
Prime Minister Nominee Faces Tough Hearing;  
Nominee in Hot Seat over Relocation of Government Agencies to  
Central Region as Part of the Sejong City Project

Hankook Ilbo  
Survey Shows People Almost Evenly Divided  
over Sejong City Project

Hankyoreh Shinmun  
President Lee under Criticism for Ignoring Illegal Acts Committed by  
Nominees Named to High-ranking Positions and Trying to Go Ahead with  
Nominations

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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President Barack Obama told CNN on Sept. 20 that North Korean leader Kim Jong-il is "pretty healthy and in control." Obama's remarks come at a time when the U.S. is considering resuming bilateral talks with North Korea. (JoongAng, Hankyoreh, Hankook, Segye, Seoul, KBS, MBC)

Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, told reporters on Sept. 19 upon his return from Japan: "The U.S. is prepared to see whether indeed North Korea is prepared to come back responsibly to sit down in the Six-Party framework and again work toward what we are all seeking to achieve - a verifiable non-nuclear Korean Peninsula." This remark is in response to North Korean leader Kim Jong-il's recent statement that the North is willing to resolve its nuclear issue through both bilateral and multilateral talks. (Chosun)

## MEDIA ANALYSIS

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### -N. Korea

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On Saturday (Sept. 19), all media front-paged a report by China's Xinhua New Agency quoting North Korean leader Kim Jong-il as telling visiting Chinese Presidential Envoy Dai Bingguo that his country is willing to participate in bilateral and multilateral talks.

Most media noted Seoul's cautious response to the report, quoting a key Blue House official as saying: "The North did not say specifically that it will return to the Six-Party Talks. We will check on what the North really means after the Chinese delegation returns home."

Conservative Chosun Ilbo described this development as proof that the current, unprecedented cooperation between the ROK, the U.S. and China to pressure North Korea is working. Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo wrote the headline: "U.S Calls for N. Korea to Return to Six-Party Talks Have Worked... Once This 'Big Obstacle' is Removed, Bosworth's Visit to N. Korea Likely to Happen Sooner." Conservative Dong-a Ilbo's headline read: "North Korea's Cycle of Provocations, Sanctions, Mediations and Dialogue in Place Again?"

Today, Chosun Ilbo carried an inside-page article entitled "U.S. Reacts with Caution to N. Korean Overtures." It quoted Kurt Campbell, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific

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Affairs, as saying on Saturday that the U.S. would wait to see if North Korea is indeed prepared to return to the Six-Party Talks. The article also quoted a diplomatic source in Washington as saying: "One important reason why the North is trying to scrap the Six-Party Talks is to nullify the Sept. 19, 2005 statement of principles. The U.S. Administration is aware of this, so it's being very cautious about changing the framework of talks."

Conservative Dong-a Ilbo editorialized on Saturday: "North Korea declared in April that it will never rejoin the Six-Party Talks. While publicly proposing multilateral dialogue, the North may demand trilateral or four-party talks in order to drive a wedge between the Six-Party countries. Judging from its past behavior, North Korea may also ask for a quid pro quo for resuming dialogue."

Moderate Hankook Ilbo editorialized today: "There is nothing wrong with the ROK's position that it will make a judgment after confirming what intentions and conditions the North has behind such overtures. However, we cannot shake off the feeling that Seoul is too inactive or passive toward the possibility of a big change in addressing North Korea's nuclear issue. ... President Lee Myung-bak left for the U.S. yesterday to attend a meeting of the UN General Assembly and the G20 Financial Summit in Pittsburgh. President Lee should use this visit as an opportunity to take a leadership role at the same time as adopting a more active attitude toward this new development in the North Korean nuclear issue."

### -G 20 Summit in Pittsburgh

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Right-of-center JoongAng Ilbo editorialized today: "The ROK is already a member of the meeting of the Group of 20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors, and will hold the presidency of the meeting next year. The ROK, which is being touted as the first country to recover from the global financial crisis, is well positioned to play a constructive role as an 'honest broker' between the developed and developing countries. In every respect, it is natural and reasonable for the ROK to host next year's G20 summit."

### -President Obama's Decision to Scrap Missile Defense Plans in Eastern Europe

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Left-leaning Hankyoreh Shinmun editorialized on Sept. 19: "This U.S. policy change, despite its denial, is aimed at improving ties with Russia. Currently, the U.S. is in urgent need of Russia's help to resolve the issues of Iran and Afghanistan, the U.S.'s most

important foreign policy goals at the moment. Discussions also need to begin on a new agreement to take the place of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, which is set to expire. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has indicated that he views Obama's decision as a responsible move and intends to respond in a forward-thinking way. Obama's policy shift has shown the potential to bring the international order into an age of cooperation rather than conflict."

#### Opinions/Editorials

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WILL OBAMA BE FOOLED?

(Dong-a Ilbo, September 19, 2009, page 30: Excerpts)

By Editorial writer Bang Hyung-nam

The Obama Administration should have learned from the past the lessons of failed U.S. diplomacy in regard to the North Korean nuclear issue. Instead, in a shift from a hard-line position, the Obama Administration accepted North Korea's overtures for bilateral talks. Even a list of incentives the U.S. could provide to the North is being floated. China tried to persuade Pyongyang to return to the Six-Party Talks through its chief envoy to the Six-Party Talks Wu Dawei. But after its failed attempt, China sent Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo to Pyongyang to meet with North Korean leader Kim Jong-il. It is odd that the U.S. and China are being swayed by North Korea as if they themselves had done something

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wrong.

The U.S. has already been deceived twice by North Korea over the nuclear issue. Former President Bill Clinton signed the 1994 Geneva Agreed Framework through the U.S.-North Korea bilateral talks but couldn't block the North from its nuclear development. Former President George W. Bush was fooled by the September 19 Joint Statement. If President Obama enters into negotiations with North Korea, he will face North Korea's third nuclear scheme. Will he be able to outmaneuver North Korea, unlike his predecessors?

Recent moves by the U.S. government are stirring concerns. The Obama Administration's initial position was that there is no alternative except the North's return to the Six-Party Talks. Then, the U.S. Administration said that U.S.-North Korea talks will take place within the framework of the Six-Party Talks. Now it has changed its position, saying that the U.S. can have bilateral negotiations with the North to facilitate the Six-Party Talks. Criticism is rife (over changes in USG positions) even in the U.S.

President Obama chairs a nuclear summit at the UN Security Council on September 24. He will also preside over the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review Conference next May. These are the steps toward realizing a nuclear-free world he espoused this April. However, Obama's diplomacy will become futile if he does not resolve the North Korean nuclear issue, which is the most pressing issue. Even if U.S.-North Korea bilateral talks take place, Obama should uphold the principle that the U.S. will not reward North Korea for its erroneous behavior. We hope that the U.S. will not be deceived by North Korea's third nuclear scheme.

KIM JONG-IL'S TRUE INTENTIONS BEHIND PROPOSAL FOR MULTILATERAL DIALOGUE

(JoongAng Ilbo, September 21, 2009, Page 45)

By Yoon Duk-min, Professor at the Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il recently told Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo that he "would like to resolve the denuclearization issue through bilateral and multilateral dialogue."

Some observers point out that (this means that) Pyongyang has finally yielded to international pressure, especially the trade

embargo imposed by China. Unsurprisingly, (Kim Jong-il's statement) fits with the tactical pattern of North Korean (foreign policy) that we've seen at least three times over the past two decades in which Pyongyang creates an external crisis in order to consolidate domestic control and, then, moves to address the outside situation.

North Korea's behavior this year is almost similar to that during the first nuclear crisis in the early 1990s. The only difference is the involvement of China. During a meeting with former U.S. President Clinton, Kim Jong-il mentioned bilateral talks but did not talk about a return to the Six-Party Talks, an issue which the North left for China, the host of the Six-Party Talks, to take up. Since its nuclear and missile tests, the North has completely sidelined China. While Kim Jong-il met with Clinton and Hyundai Group Chairwoman Hyun Jeong-eun and even sent a special delegation to President Lee Myung-bak, he did not allow Chinese Six-Party Talks chief Wu Dawei to meet with North Korean key officials during his recent visit to Pyongyang. Concerned that Beijing might lose its leadership over Korean Peninsula issues, President Hu Jintao sent Dai Bingguo as his special envoy. Although it looks as if Kim Jong-il, a master of brinkmanship diplomacy, "saved the face" of Beijing by referring to multilateral dialogue, Kim did not specifically mention the Six-Party Talks. This tactic is the same as the one that the North employed in 2007. At that time, the North made China anxious when it said in the October 4 Joint Declaration that peace on the Korean Peninsula can be addressed through "three or four-party dialogue" but did not specify whether China would be included in three-party talks.

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Through bilateral talks with the U.S., North Korea intends to establish diplomatic ties with the U.S. and, at the same time, gain recognition as a nuclear state, as India and Pakistan did. To this end, Pyongyang is trying to break up international cooperation aimed at preventing the North from joining the nuclear club. North Korea is hinting at denuclearization to the U.S., inter-Korean summit to the ROK, and the Six-Party Talks to China, respectively. Toward the new Japanese government, the North is probably taking a conciliatory approach regarding the issue of abducted Japanese (citizens).

Just because the Six-Party Talks resume does not mean that the nuclear issue will be resolved. While the Six-Party Talks were under way, the North staged two nuclear tests. What is most important in resolving the North Korean nuclear issue is for the ROK, the U.S., China, Japan, and Russia to show the North through action that, "unless it gives up its nuclear ambitions, it will suffer damage." If even a single nation is deceived by the North into withdrawing from international cooperation, we will see North Korea conduct a third nuclear test and its nuclear possession accepted as a fait accompli.

U.S. POLICY SWITCH IS A VICTORY IN RATIONALISM  
(Hankyoreh Shinmun, September 19, 2009, Page 23)

U.S. President Barack Obama announced plans yesterday to scrap the George W. Bush Administration's installation of a missile defense (MD) system in Poland and the Czech Republic, and to build a new, more flexible MD system instead. This is a welcome sign that U.S. foreign policy has begun to assume a basis in rational determinations.

Despite its huge price tag, the Bush administration's MD policy has been criticized for having limited effectiveness and for needlessly generating international conflicts. More than 90 billion dollars have been poured into the plan since its start in 2002, yet (the program's missile) interception rate has lingered below 50 percent in its more than ten-odd trials. Some analysts have even suggested that the reason the Bush Administration persisted with the program despite these lackluster results was because core policy makers like former Vice President Dick Cheney and former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld were in league with the military-industrial complex.

The Bush Administration did not stop at building an MD base in

Alaska, but also urged allies like South Korea and Japan to participate as well. This is why the (U.S.'s) MD policy has irked China and Russia. In particular, the decision that is at issue now, a December 2006 decision to introduce the MD system in Poland and the Czech Republic, has been a decisive factor in the worsening of U.S.-Russia relations. The pretext was that (setting up an MD system within these countries) would protect Europe from long-range missile attacks from Iran and North Korea, however, (Moscow) viewed the move as a (threat to Russia).

As a result, the Obama Administration's change in policy is, despite the Administration's denial, aimed at improving relations with Russia. Currently, Russia's help is urgently needed for a solution to the issues of Iran and Afghanistan, the U.S.'s most important foreign policy goals at the moment. (The U.S. also needs to begin discussion on a new agreement to take the place of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty with Russia, which is set to expire. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev has indicated that he views Obama's decision as a responsible move and intends to respond in a forward-thinking way. Obama's policy shift has shown the potential to bring the international order into an age of cooperation rather than conflict.

South Korea in turn needs to mull over the meaning of the shift by the U.S. in MD policy. Even within the ruling Democratic Party of Japan, there are growing calls to cut the MD budget. Their determination is that, rather than sinking astronomical sums of money into building an ineffective defense network, it is more pragmatic to create the kind of international environment where

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missile launches can be avoided in the first place. South Korea should make formulating a plan that can alleviate tensions a policy priority.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

WE SHOULD NOT BE OVERLY REACTIVE TO PYONGYANG'S HINT OF RETURNING TO MULTILATERAL TALKS  
(Dong-a Ilbo, September 19, 2009, Page 31, Excerpts)

North Korean leader Kim Jong-il expressed his intent yesterday (for North Korea) to return to dialogue aimed at resolving the North Korean nuclear issue. Kim told visiting Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo that he "hopes to resolve the denuclearization issue through bilateral and multilateral dialogue." This has now opened the possibility that dialogue may resume to resolve the North Korean nuclear issue. Since the statement came as a result of China's efforts to persuade Pyongyang to return to dialogue by sending Dai Bingguo to Pyongyang as President Hu Jintao's Special Envoy, Kim's words are expected to be translated into action. However, considering that Kim used the words "multilateral dialogue," which is a vague term that does not specify how many countries are involved in the talks, we cannot expect the Six-Party Talks to resume soon. North Korea may have intentionally used the confusing-sounding term in order to (hint at its goal of) achieving direct dialogue with the U.S., which it has persistently demanded.

In a situation where the North's return to the Six-Party Talks does not guarantee the resolution of the nuclear issue, Pyongyang simply mentioned its intent to hold bilateral and multilateral dialogue (and did not mention the resolution of the nuclear issue.) North Korea's state news agency made no report about it, suggesting that Kim's expression of intent to rejoin dialogue does not carry much weight.

North Korea declared in April that it will never rejoin the Six-Party Talks. While publicly proposing multilateral dialogue, the North may demand trilateral or four-party talks in order to drive a wedge between the Six-Party countries. Judging from its past behavior, North Korea may also ask for a quid pro quo for resuming dialogue. This is why we cannot be overly reactive to Kim's proposal for dialogue.

PREPARE FOR BIG CHANGE IN ADDRESSING N. KOREA'S NUCLEAR ISSUE  
(Hankook Ilbo, September 21, 2009, Page 39, Excerpts)

It is encouraging that during a meeting with visiting Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il expressed the intention (of North Korea) to join bilateral and multilateral dialogue aimed at denuclearizing the Korean Peninsula. (It is encouraging) because, by this statement, Pyongyang seems to be hinting at its return to the Six-Party Talks, which it has strongly rejected. The North Korean nuclear issue is now taking a new turn.

It is, of course, difficult to be optimistic until we determine the accurate meaning and intention of Kim's reported statement. A clearer picture will be revealed through U.S.-North Korea bilateral dialogue, which is expected to occur next month, and Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao's visit to Pyongyang. Judging from recent developments, however, it is fair to say that the North Korean nuclear issue is in the stage of dialogue.

Amid this situation, the ROKG is taking a cautious attitude, saying, "We need to fully examine in what context Kim's statement was made." There is nothing wrong with the ROKG's position that it will make a judgment after confirming what intentions and conditions the North has behind such overtures. However, we cannot shake off the feeling that Seoul is too inactive or passive toward the possibility of a big change in addressing North Korea's nuclear issue. It also looks timid and defensive to be on the guard against any progress on U.S.-North Korea relations out of concern over North Korea's

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strategy of "promoting exchange with the United States and blocking off South Korea."

After the third North Korean nuclear crisis, relevant nations are now in the phase of seeking a new framework of dialogue to resolve the issue. The ROKG should play a leading and proactive role in this process. It should remember that, if the U.S. and China lead the efforts to create a framework, the ROK, although a direct party to Korean Peninsula issues, would have to sit on the sideline. President Lee Myung-bak left for the U.S. yesterday to attend a meeting of the UN General Assembly and the G20 Financial Summit in Pittsburgh. President Lee should use this visit as an opportunity to take a leadership role while at the same time adopting a more active attitude toward this new development in the North Korean nuclear issue.

DON'T FALL FOR NORTH'S TRICKS  
(JoongAng Ilbo, September 19, 2009, Page 34)

The North Korean nuclear issue is facing an important turning point. The United States is getting ready to offer an incentive to North Korea before (holding) a bilateral meeting with the communist country, while China has dispatched a special envoy to Pyongyang in an attempt to coax the country into returning to the Six-Party Talks. At the same time, Japanese Foreign Minister Katsuya Okada, a senior figure in the Democratic Party, previously said that the new administration will take "a tough stance" with North Korea, emphasizing that talks with the country will come only after the regime launches an investigation into its abduction of Japanese people and freezes nuclear and missile tests. And Yu Myung-hwan, South Korean foreign minister, said on Friday, "I think resolving the nuclear issue should be prioritized before the inter-Korean issue."

The U.S. and China seem to be reaching out, which is a different approach than the one Japan and South Korea are taking. North Korea is trying to turn the tables in its favor by approaching South Korea and the United States in a friendly manner, taking advantage of its position after the release of two U.S. female journalists who were charged with trespassing. And the U.S. government is seemingly responding positively, signaling that it wants to resolve the nuclear issue through dialogue now that it has discovered that sanctions alone won't work. That is a so-called two-track strategy, which basically seems appropriate. But for the strategy to succeed,

prudent execution is necessary. This, after all, is North Korea, a country that has successfully used skillful brinkmanship to get its way.

The first step for success is to stick to the framework of the Six-Party Talks. Immediately after the announcement of UN sanctions, North Korea proclaimed that the Six-Party Talks had "ended permanently." North Korea, according to some observers, is attempting to induce the U.S. to withdraw its forces from South Korea by developing nuclear weapons. Resolving the nuclear issue is closely tied to the peace of the Korean Peninsula and Northeast Asia in a broader sense.

The sanctions on the North should not be lifted until there is some real progress to report in terms of resolving the nuclear issue. In the past 20 years of negotiations with North Korea, the country has always demanded the lifting of sanctions as a prerequisite to beginning negotiations. Experts say that North Korea aims to catch up with India when it comes to the nuclear development race.

But North Korea's possession of nuclear weapons is a scary proposition for the world. It is a huge threat to this region and could trigger a nuclear domino effect across Northeast Asia.

(This is a translation provided by the newspaper, and it is identical to the Korean version.)

WHAT PRESIDENT LEE SHOULD DO AT G20 SUMMIT

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(JoongAng Ilbo, September 21, 2009, page 46)

President Lee Myung-bak arrived in the U.S. this morning to attend the UN General Assembly, Climate Change Summit and G20 Summit, which will take place in New York and Pittsburgh. Even though the UN General Assembly and Climate Change Summit are meaningful, what President Lee considers most important is the G20 Summit. This is because, at the Summit, it will be decided where the next G20 Summit will be held and whether the ROK will be able to host it. President Lee should make concentrated efforts to host the G20 Summit next year by having global leaders fully realize the necessity of the next Summit and the justification for the ROK's hosting. The G20 Summit, if held in the ROK, will provide a significant opportunity for the ROK to increase its status in the international community.

The Summit for the G20 countries, which account for 85% of the (world's) GDP, was established when the G7 countries, the European Union (EU) and 12 emerging economies gathered in Washington in November 2008 to tackle the unprecedented global financial crisis. With the shared understanding that the crisis could not be overcome only through efforts by developed countries, the G20 Summit sought to involve countries with emerging economies, signaling a change in the structure of the world order in the wake of the financial crisis. As a follow-up to the second G20 Summit in London this April, the third Summit will be held in Pittsburgh on September 24 and 25.

Analysts say that the world economy has surpassed its worst point and has entered into a recovery phase,,(making) some observers skeptical about the need to hold the additional G20 Summit. Also, some European countries question the "representativeness" of the G20, arguing that the G20 should be decreased to the G13 or G14. These arguments, (if they are acted upon,) would be to our disadvantage. Even though the world economy has shown signs of recovery, (the upturn) is just a result of (sudden) fiscal expansion, and it is too early to say that the economy is moving toward sustainable recovery. The prevailing opinion is that it is too early to implement an exit strategy now. Therefore, G20 countries should continue to cooperate together.

If it is decided that the ROK hosts the fourth G20 Summit, this signifies that the G20 Summit will serve as a new "rule maker" of the world economy, replacing the G7 or G8 summit. The ROK is already a member of the meeting of the Group of 20 Finance Ministers

and Central Bank Governors, and will hold the presidency of the meeting next year. The ROK, which is being touted as the first country to recover from the global financial crisis, is well positioned to play a constructive role as an 'honest broker' between the developed and developing countries. In every respect, it is natural and reasonable for the ROK to host next year's G20 summit. This is a point President Lee should stress in Pittsburgh.

However, the harsh reality is that there are some (who believe) that the ROK is too reliant on overseas exports and makes small contributions to the international community. The ROK should make every effort to dispel this negative perception in order to host the G20 Summit and enhance its international status.

#### IT IS TIME TO MAKE CONCERTED EFFORTS FOR SUCCESSFUL NUCLEAR NEGOTIATIONS

(Hankyoreh Shinmun, September 21, 2009, page 27)

The U.S. and North Korea are swiftly moving to enter into nuclear negotiations. On September 18, North Korean leader Kim Jong-il expressed willingness to resolve the denuclearization issue through bilateral or multilateral talks. The U.S. is engaging in final discussions to lay out specific incentives for the North. All countries concerned should make concerted efforts for successful negotiations.

What matters most is North Korea's resolution. Pyongyang has made conciliatory gestures toward the outside world without, however,

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mentioning any intention to abandon its nuclear program. According to a Chinese source, Kim Jong-il told Chinese State Councilor Dai Bingguo on September 18 that North Korea will seek the goal of denuclearization. If this is true, Pyongyang should make its position clear to the world and proactively engage in related negotiations. The North also should clarify whether it will participate in the Six-Party Talks. There is no other framework that can fundamentally replace the Six-Party Talks, (which should continue) even if they are somewhat ineffective. Therefore, North Korea's equivocal remarks on multilateral talks only invite suspicion from related countries.

The U.S.'s active commitment is a requisite for successful negotiations. The U.S. should go through full consultations to come up with effective incentives and ways of negotiations in order to get North Korea to give up its nuclear ambition at the upcoming U.S.-North Korea talks. In particular, since the outcome of initial dialogue could become an important test to determine all future negotiations, the two nations should think about ways to increase mutual trust. They could establish a liaison office in each other's countries on the condition that North Korea expresses the intention to abandon its nuclear programs. It is also important that they should focus on the nuclear issue so that momentum of dialogue may not be lost.

The ROKG, for its part, should abandon its passive attitude toward nuclear negotiations, including the U.S.-North Korea dialogue. The key to the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula is (premised on) a decision by North Korea (to abandon its nuclear program), but all relevant nations share the responsibility to create an environment where Pyongyang will make a wise decision. Nevertheless, the ROKG has lost its ground by making all Korean Peninsula issues conditional on denuclearization. This attitude is highly likely to become a stumbling block to future negotiations. Seoul should change its North Korea policy in a way that will allow it to take a leadership role in negotiations while making efforts to advance inter-Korean relations and resolve the nuclear issue.

(We should not sway in our support for) the principle of denuclearization on the Korean Peninsula under any circumstances. In order to persuade Pyongyang to give up the illusion that it can be recognized as a nuclear state and to abandon its nuclear programs, relevant nations should demonstrate their strong commitment toward negotiations. Now is the time when joint efforts are desperately needed.



STEPHENS